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## Viewing cable 06MANAGUA2470, VIEWS ON ORTEGA VICTORY

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06MANAGUA2470**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">06MANAGUA2470</a>	<a href="#">2006-11-08 20:32</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">CONFIDENTIAL</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Managua</a>

Appears in these articles:

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PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHMU #2470/01 3122032  
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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA  
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INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 0806  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
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DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/CEN, WHA/USOAS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/08/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [KDEM](#) [NU](#)  
SUBJECT: VIEWS ON ORTEGA VICTORY

Classified By: Ambassador Paul A. Trivelli. Reasons 1.4 (B,D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Nicaraguan Liberal Alliance (ALN) and Sandinista Renovation Movement (MRS) contacts are resigned to Sandinista Liberation Front (FSLN) presidential candidate Daniel Ortega's victory and many blame his win on the Liberal Constitutional Party's (PLC) disinformation campaign against the ALN and candidate Eduardo Montealegre. The evening of November 7, Montealegre publicly recognized Ortega's victory, noting that the lowering of the threshold for victory from 45% to 35% had enabled Ortega to win with only 38% of the vote - and assuring the public that his opposition will be constructive, democratic, and intelligent. Meanwhile, PLC candidate Rizo has cried fraud and asserted that the PLC will come in close enough to Ortega to prompt a run off. FSLN Foreign Affairs chief Samuel Santos has privately reiterated the FSLN's desire to develop the best relations possible with the U.S. government - noting that Secretary Rice's and the National Security Council's comments regarding Ortega's victory are "very helpful and encouraging." He also assured us that the FSLN will not allow the PLC to manipulate the electoral results. END SUMMARY.

NO WAY OUT OF ORTEGA'S VICTORY

¶2. (C) The Nicaraguan government (GON) officials with whom we have conversed over the past few days appear resigned to Ortega's victory and largely fault the PLC for Ortega's apparent victory:

--According to President Bolanos' senior political adviser Frank Arana, "there is no way out of this - Daniel Ortega has won." To Arana, the remaining concern is whether the ALN or the PLC will come in second, noting that the PLC is hoping that the rural vote, some of which has not come in, could favor the PLC. While he does not believe the PLC will come in second, he fears that the FSLN and PLC could "adjust" the results to help the PLC obtain unearned Assembly seats.

--Vice-Foreign Minister Javier Williams Slate, who voted in the North Atlantic Autonomous Zone (RAAN), fears the PLC and FSLN will reaffirm their pact to the detriment of the ALN, specifically in the assignment of Assembly seats. He also believes that the CSE's stalling in releasing the results suggests it could be manipulating them to the FSLN's and PLC's benefit.

--Vice Minister of Government Deyanira Arguello said she is depressed by the results and predicts that the Sandinista government will set the country back years. According to Arguello, a family friend desperately called her to report

that the FSLN has told him to leave the country or he and his family will be killed.

--Foreign Minister Norman Caldera opined that the division of Liberals permitted the Sandinista victory and that this division must be remedied.

ALN VIEWS: "WE ARE THE SECOND POLITICAL FORCE"

13. (C) In our conversations with ALN interlocutors, most are disappointed over the election outcome but comforted by the fact that the ALN is emerging as Nicaragua's second political force, replacing the PLC.

--On the evening of November 7, Eduardo Montealegre met with Ortega and publicly acknowledged the FSLN candidate's victory, noting that the lowering of the threshold for victory from 45% to 35% enabled Ortega to win with only 38% of the vote. Montealegre assured the public that he will create a constructive, democratic, and intelligent opposition that will be firm and honest in its efforts to resolve the country's problems and to change Nicaragua's political culture. Montealegre promised to help Ortega's government succeed and called for the PLC and MRS to unite with the ALN to form a majority in the new National Assembly.

--Miguel Lopez Baldizon (seventh on the ALN's slate of national level Assembly deputies and Alliance for the Republic, APRE president) blamed the PLC and its smear campaign against Montealegre for allowing a Sandinista victory. He said the ALN is closely monitoring the distribution of Assembly seats, adverting that the FSLN and the PLC could collude to ensure that between the two parties they maintain the supermajority in the legislative body.

--ALN vice-presidential candidate Fabricio Cajina (Conservative Party) conceded that Ortega has won the election, attributing his victory to the PLC's machinations against Montealegre -- particularly the PLC's distribution of a fake letter reporting that Montealegre had withdrawn his candidacy and radio spots that claimed Montealegre had fled the country.

--Delia Arellano (ninth on the ALN's slate of national level Assembly deputies and affiliated with Camino Cristiano) was disappointed with the outcome. She will not receive an Assembly seat and faulted the PLC for Ortega's victory.

--For Contra leader/ALN supporter Enrique Zelaya (Doctor Henry), who was in Matagalpa during the elections, "the PLC did its part in the pact very well," referring to its smear campaign against Montealegre that convinced some anti-Sandinista voters, especially in rural areas, that Rizo was best positioned to defeat Ortega.

MRS PREDICTS ORTEGA WILL HAVE A ROUGH TIME MANAGING THE AMBITIONS OF HIS INNER CIRCLE

14. (C) MRS spokesperson Israel Lewites termed the election results "unfortunate." Estimating that the FSLN stole 1-2 percentage points, he also conceded that "the FSLN effectively channeled the discontent of the Nicaraguan people." Lewites predicted that Ortega's government will have a "rough time" because "holy trinity" members VP/Aleman godfather Jaime Morales Carazo, Rosario Murillo, and Bayardo Arce will jockey for power. (NOTE: On November 7, MRS presidential candidate Edmundo Jarquin acknowledged that Ortega had won the election. END NOTE.)

FSLN FOREIGN AFFAIRS CHIEF CALLS FOR BEST RELATIONS POSSIBLE

15. (C) FSLN Foreign Affairs chief Samuel Santos called polcouns on November 8 to express the FSLN's desire to develop the best relations possible with the U.S. government

- noting that Secretary Rice's and the National Security Council's comments regarding Ortega's victory are "very helpful and encouraging." He reiterated his belief that our common goals to combat poverty and hunger will serve as a starting point for a constructive relationship. Commenting on the PLC's refusal to concede that Ortega has won the election, he assured polcouns that the FSLN will not allow the PLC to manipulate the electoral results.

FSLN DISSIDENT - THIS IS WHAT DEMOCRACY IS ABOUT

16. (C) FSLN dissident Alejandro Martinez Cuenca told us that he did not consider Ortega a suitable candidate for today's Nicaragua, but the people's aspirations were different and that is what democracy is about. The fact that Ortega won with a minority vote and the Assembly's composition is now much more pluralistic than it has been in the past ten years should be considered "real guarantees" that Ortega has little political leverage to put Nicaragua and the business climate at risk.

ORTEGA'S STEPDAUGHTER MORE DETERMINED THAN EVER TO COMBAT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

17. (C) Ortega's stepdaughter Zoilamerica Narvaez called polcouns the evening of November 7. While understandably concerned over Ortega's victory, Narvaez told polcouns that she is now more determined than ever to continue her case before the Inter-American Human Rights Commission and to combat violence against women in Nicaragua. She will rely on the support of the Nicaraguan Women's Network (an umbrella women's rights organization) to carry forward.

PLC REFUTES FSLN VICTORY, CHALLENGES ALN FOR SECOND PLACE

18. (SBU) Refuting Ortega's victory, the PLC candidate Rizo and his supporters continue to cry fraud and assert that the PLC will come in close enough to Ortega to prompt a run off. (COMMENT: The Supreme Electoral Council's fifth release of election tallies - covering over 91% of the vote - narrowed the margin between Montealegre and Rizo to around 3%, beyond Etica y Transparencia's (ET) quick count margin of error. END COMMENT.)

CIVIL SOCIETY -- WE ARE NEEDED NOW MORE THAN EVER

19. (C) Members of civil society organizations sympathetic with Nicaragua's emerging democratic forces are generally disappointed in Ortega's apparent victory, but are encouraged that the ALN placed second and will be able to effect change through its presence in the National Assembly. Movimiento por Nicaragua executive director Pilar Martinez believes that civil society will be needed "now more than ever," and that it must lobby to change the ability for a presidential candidate to win with only 35% of the valid votes cast. Martinez told us that MpN will assess the entire cedula issuance process to determine how much it affected Nicaraguan citizens' right to vote. Also, the MpN will press Daniel Ortega to sign the MpN's governance agreement, a document that candidates Montealegre and Jarquin signed before the election. In addition to advancing electoral reform, MpN will also focus on social development, judicial reform, civic participation, and governability, she said.

110. (C) Permanent Human Rights Commission (CPDH) executive director Marcos Carmona believes "Ortega's victory is likely thanks to Arnoldo Aleman and his arrogance." He ventured that his and other NGOs will require more U.S. assistance than ever, especially to defend human rights. (COMMENT: CDPH recently helped Miskito Indians file before the Inter-American Human Rights Commission (IAHCR) its claims of human rights atrocities committed by Daniel Ortega and other Sandinista leaders against the Miskito population on the Atlantic Coast in the 1980s. CDPH members have received

threats from the Sandinistas and we expect that with an FSLN victory, these threats could intensify.)

#### University Professors Fear PLC Foul Play

¶11. (SBU) According to a number of university professors in Managua, the PLC is desperately trying to place second and is likely "negotiating" with the FSLN to achieve this goal.

#### COMMENT

¶12. (C) Only the PLC has not conceded Ortega's victory. Montealegre's decision to trump the PLC by acknowledging Ortega's win and his assurances that he will form a constructive, democratic, and intelligent opposition helped establish him as the leader of a new democratic opposition that when legislating will place the better interests of Nicaragua and its people ahead of the narrow, personal interests of a small political elite.

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